

Announcements

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[« Previous](#)

Page: 1 of 10

[Next »](#)

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Attempt limit for USMLE examinations

Posted: June 20, 2012

Examinees who have made six or more attempts to pass a Step or Step component, including incomplete attempts, should be aware that all applications to register for additional attempts will not be processed unless they are submitted on or before **December 31, 2012**. This limit was first announced in August of 2011.

The effective date for the six-attempt limit depends upon whether an examinee has taken any Step or Step Component (including incomplete attempts) before January 1, 2012.

- **Examinees who had NOT taken any Step or Step Component before January 1, 2012**

If you did **not** take any Step or Step Component before January 1, 2012, the six-attempt limit went into effect for all exam applications that you submitted on or after January 1, 2012.

Example 1: On January 15, 2012, Examinee A submits his application for his first attempt at any Step or Step Component. The six-attempt limit is effective at that time for all Steps and Step Components and Examinee A will be allowed to take each Step or Step Component no more than six times, including incomplete attempts.

- **Examinees who have taken any Step or Step Component before January 1, 2012**

If you have taken **any** Step or Step Component (including incomplete attempts) before January 1, 2012, the six-attempt limit is in effect for all exam applications that you submit on or after January 1, 2013. After that date, all attempts at a Step or Step Component will be counted toward the limit, regardless of when the exams were taken.

Example 2: Examinee B's application for a seventh attempt at a particular Step or Step Component is received on December 15, 2012. For this examinee, the six-attempt limit will not prevent the seventh attempt, since the application was submitted before January 1, 2013. However, if Examinee B fails the exam, he will not be eligible to submit an application after January 1, 2013 to retake that Step or Step Component.

Example 3: Examinee C attempts to submit an application for a seventh attempt at a particular Step or Step Component on or after January 1, 2013. The application will not be processed, since all exam applications submitted on or after January 1, 2013 will be subject to the six-attempt limit.

NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS AND TIME LIMITS

The USMLE program limits to six the total number of times an examinee can take the same Step or Step Component. An examinee is ineligible to take a Step or Step Component if the examinee has made **six or more prior attempts** to pass that Step or Step Component, including incomplete attempts. All attempts at a Step or Step Component are counted toward the limit, regardless of when the examinations were taken.

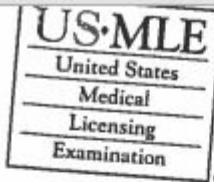
Information regarding state-specific requirements for licensure can be obtained on the FSMB [website](#). Note: MD/PhD students should reference the USMLE [website](#) for more specific information regarding exceptions to time limits.

RETAKING FAILED EXAMINATIONS

You may not take the same examination more than three times within a 12-month period. Your fourth and subsequent attempts must be at least 12 months after your first attempt at that examination and at least six months after your most recent attempt at that examination.

RETAKING PREVIOUSLY PASSED STEPS

If you pass a Step or Step Component, you are not allowed to retake it, except to comply with the time limit of a medical licensing authority or another authority recognized by the USMLE program. Visit the USMLE [website](#) for more information. If you have not yet passed Step 3 and need to retake a previously passed Step 1 or Step 2 examination in order to meet a time limit imposed by a US medical licensing authority or another authority



Via Email and US Mail
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April 17, 2014

Richard Katz
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East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

USMLE ID: 0-631-475-1

Email: cat2400@msn.com

Dear Dr. Katz:

I am in receipt of your letter and supporting documents, received by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), dated April 1, 2014.

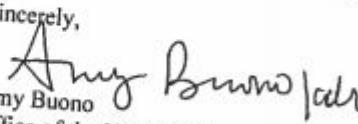
With respect to your request for an exception to the USMLE policy that limits the number of attempts on the Step and Step components, the imposition of the attempt limit was widely disseminated well ahead of the implementation date through USMLE and ECFMG publications.

Additionally, individuals, such as yourself, who already had prior USMLE exam attempts, were given an additional one year, until January 1, 2013, beyond the effective date of January 1, 2012 for new examinees. While your dedication to the field of medicine is admirable, your request for an additional attempt at Step 1 cannot be granted. However, you do remain eligible to take Step 2 CK and Step 2 CS.

According to the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*, the only exception to this policy identified by the USMLE Composite Committee (the governing body of the USMLE program) involves state medical boards. The policy includes a provision to allow examinees who have six or more attempts at a Step or component to have an additional attempt if so requested by a state medical board that is fully informed of the individual's prior examination history.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please call me at (215) 590-9877 or e-mail me at USMLESec@nbme.org.

Since you,


Amy Buono, J.D.
Office of the USMLE Secretariat

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